

REMARKS

Re-examination and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority, and for confirming that certified copies of the priority documents were received from the International Bureau.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for indicating his consideration of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on June 13, 2006, as evidenced by the return of a completed PTO-1449 Form.

However, the Examiner inadvertently failed to confirm the acceptability of the filed drawings. Absent an indication to the contrary in the next official communication, Applicants believe the filed drawings to be acceptable.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that dependent claims 8, 10 and 11 contain allowable subject matter, and that these claims would be allowable if they are amended to be placed in independent form, including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By the current amendment, Applicants amend claim 1 to include substantially all the subject matter of objected claim 8, along with substantially all the subject matter of intervening claims 2 and 5-7. Similarly, Applicants amend objected claim 10 to place it in independent form, including substantially all the limitations of the base claim (there being no intervening claims). In this regard, Applicants note that claim 11 depends from claim 10, and thus, Applicants have not revised claim 11 to be an independent claim.

In view of the current amendments to the claims, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 10 and dependent claims 3, 9 and 11 are allowable over the

applied art of record. Furthermore, Applicants submit that since the ground for the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection no longer exist, it is not necessary to discuss the appropriateness of this rejection herein.

Applicants further submit that objected claim 8 is allowable over the art of record for the features recited therein, without requiring the features of intervening claims 2 and 5-7. Thus, while, as noted above, claim 1 is amended to include substantially all the features of intervening claims 2 and 5-7 and objected claim 8, Applicants have additionally amended claim 8 to herein be presented with the features of base claim 1 (that is, without the features of intervening originally presented claims 2 and 5-7). Accordingly, it is submitted that amended independent claim 8, along with its dependent claims 2 and 4-7 are allowable over the applied art of record, and respectfully request such an indication from the Examiner.

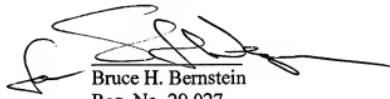
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have done so. Applicants have amended the claims to enhance clarity and to emphasize additional features of the present application.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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